

Jewish Readings and Song for Peaceful Presence 6/11/20
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The words of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel:

The challenge we face is a test of our integrity. We are all on trial, we are all under judgment. The issue is not political or social expediency. The issue is whether we are morally strong, whether we are spiritually worthy to answer God's demand. Shall we continue to be deaf, shall we continue to be sensitive only when our own needs and interests are involved?

We have attained a high standard of living. We must seek to attain a high standard of thinking.

The problem we face is to be or not to be human. The situation of the Negro is the test, the trial and the risk. . . .

The plight of the Negro is a living reminder of our failure, a melancholy example of our dereliction. I cannot speak about the Negro without embarrassment at the fact that it was not the authority of the religious institutions that proclaimed once and for all the evil of segregation, that the religious institutions had to be prodded into action by the decision of the Supreme Court of 1954. . . .

What is needed is a spiritual revolution. We must rise to a higher plane of thinking. (Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Insecurity of Freedom*, NY: Schocken, 1972, p. 104-107)

Most of us, Negro and white, have not yet completed the crossing of the Red Sea. There is still a long way to go. (Heschel, p. 103)

Ozi v'zimrat Yah vayehi li liy'shu'a.

God is my strength and my song. (Exodus 15:2)
God will be my redemption.